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TLC Year in Review

Gera, Ralucca

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School

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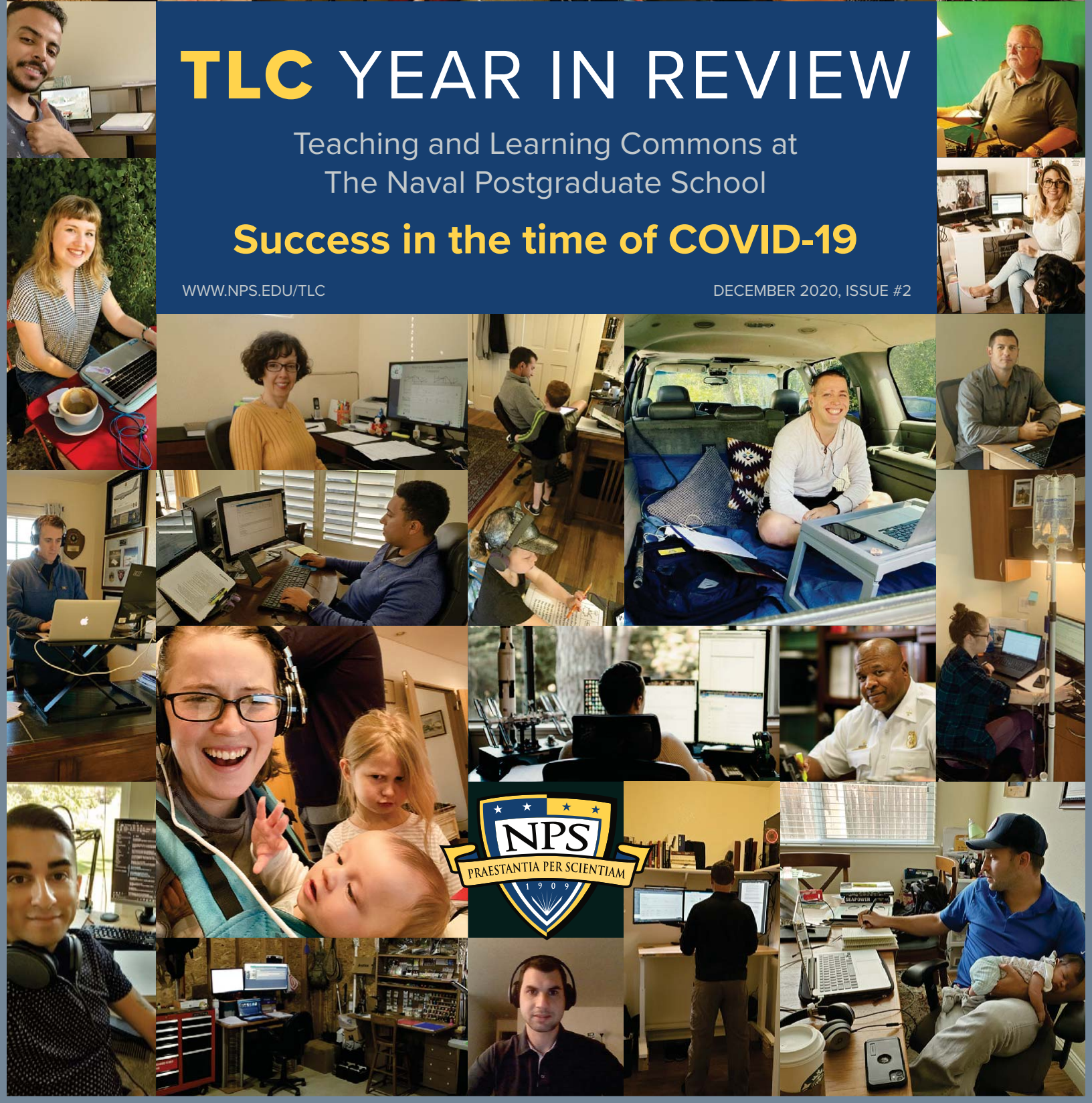
TLC YEAR IN REVIEW

Teaching and Learning Commons at
The Naval Postgraduate School

Success in the time of COVID-19

WWW.NPS.EDU/TLC

DECEMBER 2020, ISSUE #2





Prof. Ralucca Gera
Director, TLC
Associate Provost
for Graduate Education



CAPT Scott Bischoff,
USN (Ret)
Co-Director, TLC
CIO and Director,
Information Technology



Mr. Tom Rosko
Co-Director, TLC
University Librarian

FORWARD FROM THE DIRECTORS

As the Teaching and Learning Commons (TLC) second year ends, we have the pleasure of looking back at TLC's activities informed by the data collected during the biannual department visits and open forums.

Yearly, the TLC chooses an annual initiative that focuses our collaborative efforts. In 2019, we worked with the schools through Flexible Learning Experiences (FLEx) Spaces to provide flexible resident learning environments that supported a diverse community. In 2020 we built upon that initiative with the Distance Learning Quality initiative (DLQi) providing exemplars and training for faculty teaching DL. As a result of these efforts, the TLC was uniquely positioned to work with faculty during the intense transition and sustainment of the COVID-19 era.

The TLC's success relies upon our partnership with faculty and students to foster a culture of sharing and learning. This was especially true this past Spring in supporting faculty during the rapid transition to DL. We are so thankful for all the faculty who voluntarily engaged with the TLC contributing to the

Faculty Voices and Faculty Practitioner series. The TLC website provides access to these on-demand recordings and avenues for submitting feedback, that supplies data for us to inform our decisions for faculty support in an efficient and timely manner.

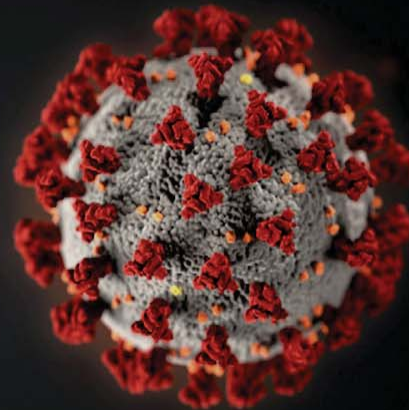
As we look ahead, the TLC continues to support quality learning that drives the military forward by leveraging experiences of a community of educators supported by educational technology. Building on past initiatives, in 2021, our third year of partnership, the TLC's Data Analytics Informing Teaching and Hybrid Learning (DAiTa HL) initiative will focus on data driven learning. We are committed to leading positive change driven by data and requirements to support quality education for our officers. And for that, we invite you to reach out to us with requirements and ideas of how the TLC can best support you!

Ralucca Gera



TLC GUIDES NPS' TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

By Matthew Schehl



In March 2020, a virulent global pandemic swiftly swept across America, bringing daily life to a jarring standstill virtually overnight. The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), however, hardly missed a beat. In short order, it seamlessly transitioned to nearly total distance learning (DL), ensuring the university remained steadily on course to continue delivering excellence in advanced education to the nation's military officers.

Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, approximately one third of NPS faculty taught via DL; over the course of the Spring Quarter, this figure had risen to one hundred percent. Propelling this remarkable transformation was the university's Teaching and Learning Commons (TLC), a relatively new cross-campus consortium dedicated to enhancing the quality of NPS education. Although less than

"When the transition to DL was first announced, the TLC played a 'boots on the ground' role, meeting with faculty one-on-one or with school departments," explained Prof. Ralucca Gera, TLC director and Associate Provost for Graduate Education. "Our goal was to provide the necessary information required to empower faculty who had never taught DL before or who had never used DL technology. What distinguished our support was our proactive approach with regard to anticipating challenges, identifying resources, and then reaching out to faculty to work with them on finding personalized solutions that meet their instructional needs."

The TLC was born of a recognized need to bring people and ideas together from across campus. Since its inception in the Spring of 2018, it has functioned as a

specifically geared towards the school's unique student population.

"Think of the TLC as a cohesive, virtual umbrella organization over existing centers—nobody belongs to the TLC, but we bring together faculty and student perspectives as well as the technology to support their requirements," Gera said. "Our focus is to enhance teaching and learning and instill awareness of the resources that faculty and students have for that."

The enterprise's success came down to communication. The TLC went to great lengths to engage the NPS community, holding a series of open forums to discuss critical issues, conducting surveys, visiting departments to determine the best ways to support them, and launching an innovative mini-grant program to seed emerging educational methods and technologies.

When the coronavirus struck and NPS President, retired Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau, mandated all residential unclassified classes immediately transition to DL for the start of the academic quarter on March 30, these efforts had laid an effective groundwork for the TLC to act as a central hub for communication, information, web-based resources and tools to support the transition.

"If COVID were to have hit NPS prior to the formation of the TLC, the campus organizations would have been able to respond in their own way, but in silos," observed D'Marie Bartolf, Coordinator of Education Innovation at NPS. "Because

"Our goal was to provide the necessary information required to empower faculty who had never taught DL before or who had never used DL technology."

—Prof. Ralucca Gera

two years old, the TLC was able to draw on the extensive inroads, partnerships and open lines of communication it had cultivated in that short time to rapidly and effectively adapt to the unfolding crisis.

The TLC did so by remaining true to its founding mission: it listened to the NPS community. Even under trying conditions, it engaged, experimented and then supported faculty in order to move forward.

collaborative community of practice at NPS: the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Education (OAP-GE) partnered with the Dudley Knox Library (DKL) and Information and Technology Communications Services (ITACS) to coordinate a wide range of specialized services and resources. By joining forces, these entities were able to serve as a catalyst for the creation of new teaching and learning environments at NPS

the TLC was created 18 months prior to COVID, the communication bridges were in place that allowed NPS to be uniquely positioned to respond to COVID in a collaborative manner.”

The OAP-GE, DKL and ITACS all stepped up in equal measure to ensure these bridges were solid, and that the needs of students, faculty and staff continued to be met. One of the initial challenges in realizing this was making sure an adequate information technology infrastructure was in place. For this, ITACS had the right tools for the job.

“We were fortunate to have most of the tools in place prior to COVID,” noted retired Capt. Scott Bischoff, NPS CIO and Information Technology Director. “We made the decision years ago to invest in Microsoft 365. It is cloud based and suits remote work well, not only as a system of productivity applications, but

also the security apparatus behind the scenes.”

On top of meeting an increased demand for help desk assistance, ITACS renewed Zoom licenses for web conferencing and ensured a good VPN and firewalls with sufficient capability to handle the remote surge and the entire campus teleworking. Through the TLC, it conducted trainings on using the Sakai learning management system and Microsoft Teams for teleworking and DL classes, which were recorded and posted to the NPS intranet for easy access, on-demand training. A TLC Learning Cafe was also set up in Microsoft Teams to allow staff and faculty to post questions and learn from each other.

Additionally, ITACS established a 24x7 Cybersecurity Operations Center to defend the evolving infrastructure and

continuously worked to provide and maintain user hardware—laptops, webcams and other telework tools—even as supply chains stretched thin.

“We responded well, but of course there’s no way any of this happened without the close attention of a very talented IT staff,” Bischoff said. “Keep in mind that we are supporting 300ish classes a quarter and more than 500 staff workers. Our staff has been unbelievably good, the help desk actually improved productivity, and our DevOps team built new processes and tools to fit the model and kept everything humming in the data center and in the cloud.”

The infrastructure ITACS sustained allowed NPS to remain united and functioning despite the manifold challenges and uncertainty of the unfolding COVID environment. Navigating this

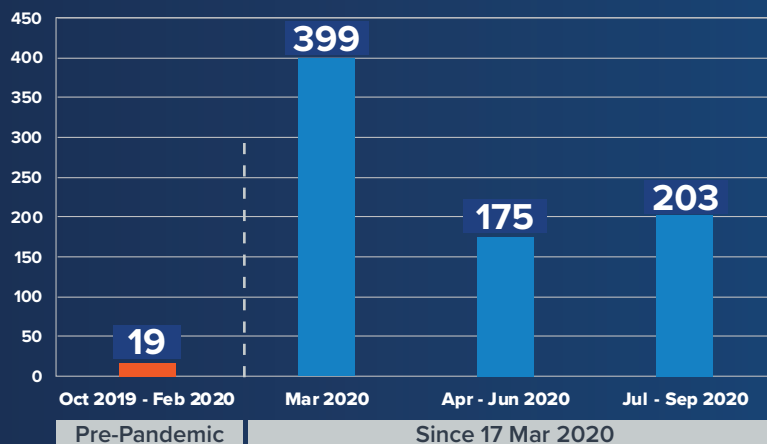
ITACS TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

2020 Zoom-Support Highlights

NPS faculty faced a considerable task of shifting gears with minimal lead time. First and foremost, organizations relied on the tried and true support of the Information Technology and Communication Services (ITACS) Technology Assistance Center (TAC) and Content Learning Environment (CLE) support teams.

Zoom was adopted as the primary mode of communication supporting classroom instruction. In addition to concurrent demands supporting Sakai and Teams, ITACS’s CLE team managed the heavy load of ensuring all faculty were properly equipped with the tools and training necessary to continue to deliver quality education. Visit ITACS website (<https://nps.edu/web/technology>).

JIRA Help Desk Tickets for Zoom



265 New Zoom Accounts Created



Mar - Jul 2020

686 Zoom accounts converted from ZoomEd to ZoomGov



Aug - Sep 2020



By Greta E. Marlatt

As the COVID environment continues to challenge us, and campus capabilities for remote teaching and learning have evolved, so has the response of the Dudley Knox Library (DKL). In the early days of the virus we could not borrow books from other libraries or check out our own books. The Library's immediate response, however, was to offer to scan book chapters to help faculty provide necessary readings for their courses. As time progressed, and it became obvious this was going to be a prolonged event, the Library instituted "curb-side" checkouts and "print on demand" services both of which now allow faculty and students to safely pick up materials in the lobby. Throughout this time, the Library's electronic resources and services have remained available and have been well utilized and we are now considering new ways to continue to expand our services. We have also developed and made available a small suite of "how-to" videos and workshop recordings. Visit DKL website (<https://library.nps.edu/>).



DKL Outreach & Academic Support Manager, Greta Marlatt, sets up course resources for contact-less pickup

was no easy task, yet the TLC lost no time in touching base with the NPS community.

The TLC immediately began conducting periodic surveys which, as the Spring Quarter progressed, captured feedback from faculty and students enabling the TLC to better coordinate support for teaching and learning, according to Gera.

"Back in March 2020 we found ourselves in a living laboratory environment, and the TLC's main goal was to support faculty as they transitioned to DL and explored new ways to engage the students," she said. "We looked to determine the necessary technical and functional support required to enable a successful transition. In addition, we provided teaching guidelines for faculty, and lessons learned from DL veterans and novices."

The training sessions the TLC recorded and made available on-demand, plus a

plethora of additional resources they've created, have enabled a rapid shift from residence to DL classes for all the faculty that started teaching online for the first time and established a bedrock for subsequent academic quarters as the pandemic persists.

Based on feedback from the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) as well as the Classrooms of the Future initiative, the TLC also purchased a range of equip-

"We wanted to make sure faculty had the proper equipment to support the development and delivery of both synchronous and asynchronous activities," Gera said. "After using these devices for some months for online teaching, some faculty will now bring their newly acquired online experience and devices to hybrid learning in Winter Quarter 2021, and furthermore to the ever-evolving teaching and learning ecosystem at NPS."

"...we are supporting 300ish classes a quarter and more than 500 staff workers. Our staff has been unbelievably good, the help desk actually improved productivity, and our DevOps team built new processes and tools to fit the model."

—CAPT Scott Bischoff, USN (Ret)

ment enabling faculty to teach directly from their homes, including Microsoft Surface Pro tablet computers with pens, document cameras, web cameras, microphones and connecting dongles.

That this ecosystem has continued to grow and thrive in the austere conditions of the COVID environment is testament to the collaborative strength of its stakeholders, including instructional

designers, media developers, graphics designers, librarians and instructional coaches.

“There are many stakeholders in the delivery of high quality education to our students,” said Dr. Dennis Lester, Director of the Graduate Education Advancement Center (GEAC). “In addition to our schools and departments that play the primary role, organizations such

during the transition to the COVID environment was to have all of these organizations working together—seamlessly and quickly—to provide optimal solutions for our most important stakeholder—our students.”

This is where the TLC shined. The collaborative culture it fostered in its pre-pandemic days now easily facilitated a rapid whole-of-campus response as

able to readily adapt existing programs and services and leverage relationships with faculty.

“The OTL was able to identify the critical requirements for emergency online instruction and provided small group and individual assistance to address them,” commented Ali Rodgers, OTL Director of Faculty Development. “This was integrated with faculty training to use web-based technologies provided by the TLC and ITACS. Collaborative and synchronized interactions provided valuable information that facilitated outreach to schools and departments to determine additional needs and to resolve emerging problems.”

This spirit of collaboration echoed throughout the university. The DKL, long the epicenter of campus life, remained a hub of teaching and learning through continuously working with the

“Collaborative and synchronized interactions provided valuable information that facilitated outreach to schools and departments to determine additional needs and to resolve emerging problems.”

—Ali Rodgers, Director, OTL

as the GEAC, ITACS, DKL, Graduate Writing Center (GWC) and Thesis Processing Office (TPO) all play a crucial support role. Our biggest challenge

the university moved to online instruction. For example, the GEAC’s Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL), already an integral part of TLC initiatives, was

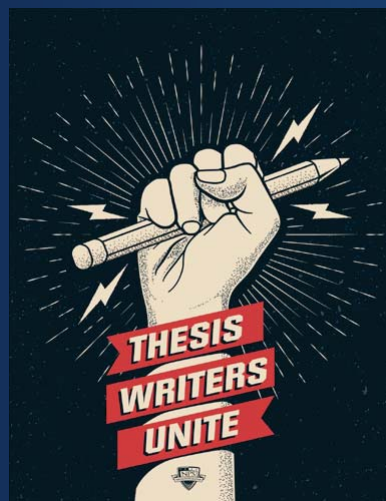
GRADUATE WRITING CENTER STUDENT SUPPORT

By Jasmine Mally

The Graduate Writing Center (GWC) has supported NPS student and faculty writing and academic skills since 2013. The center transitioned well to online learning in the spring quarter with writing-coaching and workshop services remaining in high demand. Indeed, spring quarter 2020 was the GWC’s busiest spring ever with 1,387 coaching appointments held; summer workshops had a higher than usual turnout with 353 seats filled.

Providing one-to-one coaching affords the GWC unique insight into students’ experiences, as students often share how situations are serving their academic, professional, and personal goals. GWC director Dr. Sandra Leavitt has brought these perspectives forward by serving on the Spring Assessment/Summer Recommendation Committee that worked to support students inside and outside the classroom.

To help alleviate challenges presented by remote learning, the GWC piloted several new services. In spring, coaches provided a virtual space called Thesis Writers United. The goal is to help replace the casual, in-person conversations students would normally have between classes or when dropping by the Thesis Processing Office. Asynchronous coaching launched in late spring. In this format, students receive written feedback on their writing, which they can view at their convenience and refer back to. The GWC continuously updates its online resources to support students’ independent learning. Visit GWC website (<https://nps.edu/web/gwc>).



GRADUATE EDUCATION ADVANCEMENT CENTER

Providing support and resources to advance the quality of education at NPS

The role of quality instructional design was critical during the COVID 19 transition. Faculty and students' learning environments changed, shifting the way communication and learning occurs. As a result, the Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) supported by the GEAC Instructional Design (ID) team played the important role of providing on-demand triage for courses and supporting faculty to ensure their content plan was strategically prepared.

GEAC's accessible and responsive ID team provided NPS faculty course customization, tailoring content plans to course requirements and student needs in an iterative and timely manner. The team continues to focus on redesigning instruction and incorporating educational technologies, highlighting promising practices of NPS faculty through efforts like the Camtasia training and Distance Resources to Improve Pedagogy (DRIP) series.

Contact OTL (otlpetal@nps.edu) for course consultations and teaching, learning, and assessment resources. Email the ID team for designing learning experiences and incorporating learning technologies (GEACInstrDesign@nps.edu).

GEAC GRADUATE EDUCATION ADVANCEMENT CENTER

Distance Resources to Improve Pedagogy (DRIP) Workshop

Engage!
Adding Real Student Engagement to Online & Hybrid Courses
Tuesday 10 November
1200-1300 Pacific Time

Featuring:
Denny Lester GEAC
Deborah Gibbons GSDM



GEAC GRADUATE EDUCATION ADVANCEMENT CENTER

Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning
From a presentation by Dr. Fred Wehling, GEAC
Recorded April 23, 2020



GEAC online trainings and events to enhance DL and COVID response support.

NPS community. The NPS virtual town halls, according to University Librarian Tom Rosko, provided the opportunity not only to communicate services to students and faculty, but for the library to listen to—and meet—their needs.

“For instance, we learned of the need for printing and we were, and continue to be, able to provide some print-on-demand services as well as access to interlibrary loan resources,” he said. “Similarly, we also started a pick-up service so that students and faculty could request physical copies of books and pick them up in the library lobby or have them mailed to them if they could not come on campus.”

“Throughout this time, the library’s electronic resources and services have remained available and have been well utilized and we are now considering ways to continue to expand our services,” added Greta Marlatt, DKL Outreach

and Collection Development Director. “We have also developed a suite of ‘how-to’ videos as well as making recordings of workshops available.”

Last Spring, the coronavirus drastically altered NPS’ educational landscape. Yet the TLC showed up. It listened. It engaged the community, experimented with innovative solutions and fully supported faculty, enabling them to move forward and, despite the sudden pivot to full DL learning, NPS did not waver in its core mission.

The TLC continues to provide comprehensive support as COVID conditions

continue and students provide feedback on their needs and the challenges they experience. Underlying this success is a current of community in the truest sense of the term, and the TLC’s recognition that community engagement is not only a pedagogical but also a psychological imperative.

“Our goal,” Gera said, “is to continue to support a diverse population of faculty who continue to deliver quality online education, supporting their flexible teaching styles that enable distinctive learning experiences.”

“If COVID were to have hit NPS prior to the formation of the TLC, the campus organizations would have been able to respond in their own way, but in silos...”

—D’Marie Bartolf,
Coordinator of Education Innovation, NPS

DISTANCE LEARNING QUALITY INITIATIVE (DLQI), YEAR ONE

By Ali Rodgers

The Distance Learning Quality Initiative (DLQI) is a two-year Teaching and Learning Commons (TLC) campus initiative that began during AY 20. During its first year, Phase One emphasized quality standards at the course level. Continuing in AY21, Phase Two will introduce quality standards at the curriculum level to promote continuity and more cohesive learning experiences across the curriculum.

Phase One of the DLQI Pilot was designed to introduce faculty to quality standards and best instructional practices for course development and the delivery of instruction for synchronous, asynchronous, and blended courses. The pilot was delivered as a short course with seminars and practical exercises for participants to learn, practice, to assess an existing course, receive ongoing support to integrate educational technologies, to incorporate quality standards, and to enhance learning and instruction for different delivery platforms.

Specific goals guided the development for Phase One of the DLQI Pilot.

1. Introduce DLQ standards to faculty
2. Obtain feedback and suggestions to improve the DLQI course materials and resources

3. Explore challenges to implementing the standards on campus

4. Identify the standards, resources, and support that faculty find the most useful and valuable.

The faculty representatives nominated by schools and departments for Phase One of the DLQI Pilot include: Angela Archambault, Paul Clark, Steve Iatrou, Monique Fargues, Deborah Gibbons, LTC Glenn A. Hodges, USA, and Guillermo Owens. Their feedback and recommendations will be incorporated to further refine future offerings of Phase One. Suggestions will also be considered in the development of the Phase 2 Pilot that will introduce and integrate quality standards at the curricular and programmatic levels.

The DLQI initiatives are coordinated and led by the Graduate Education Advancement Center (GEAC) Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) and supported by GEAC's team of skilled instructional designers, graphic, and media developers.

[Learn More About The DLQI Initiative](#)



TLC, with the support of GEAC, published the *Distance Learning Quality Guide* in 2020, which covers a variety of useful topics relevant to engaging and successful DL course design, development, assessment, and delivery.



"I think the largest hurdles are getting faculty to recognize that they are not expert teachers; that DL and face to face education are not the same; and DL/ Learning requires different skills and more attention to detail in regards to materials and instructor engagement."

— LTC Glenn A. Hodges, USA
Assistant Professor/Deputy Director,
MOVES Institute



"My goal was to develop an asynchronous course on GPC. I met my goal... in the future, I hope to enhance future courses by having a more learning-centered approach. We are in the process of developing a new cultural course and I see the tools you [the TLC] gave as helpful in ensuring we look at the big picture."

— Angela Archambault,
Faculty Associate, NSA

FACULTY VOICES

Cultivating a Community of Practice



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Faculty Voices

PROF. LAURA ALFORD

Graduate School of Defense Management

Understanding Impacts on
Students' Learning

PROF. MARIGEE BACOLOD

Graduate School of Defense Management

iPad+Apple pencil, Notability app on
the iPad, and QuickTime Player

SR. LECTURER PHIL CANDREVA

Graduate School of Defense Management

A Veteran's Guide to Online
Instruction

Faculty Practitioner Series: "Evolution
of a Course Taught in Three Modes"

PROF. DANIEL EISENBERG

Operations Research

Faculty Practitioner Series: "Redesign
of OS4621: Critical Infrastructure
Analysis & Defense"

PROF. KRISTIN GIAMMARCO

Systems Engineering

Faculty Practitioner Series: "Teaching
at a Distance: Bridging the Gap
between the Possible and the Practical"

PROF. LATIKA HARTMANN

Graduate School of Defense Management

Zoom with iPad Pro and Apple Pencil

PROF. MICHAEL MALLEY

National Security Affairs

From Zero-to-60, or at least 35,
with Zoom

SR. LECTURER GREG MISLICK

Operations Research

Keeping Your Students Engaged

PROF. RODRIGO NIETO-GOMEZ

National Security Affairs

NSA Faculty on Setting Up Your
Instructional Environment

PROF. CLIFF WHITCOMB

Systems Engineering

Faculty Practitioner Series:
"Teaching Online is Different"



Faculty Practitioner Series presenters.

(from left to right: P. Candreva, C. Whitcomb, K. Giammarco, D. Eisneberg)

WHAT'S NEXT...

By Dennis Lester

For last year's first year *TLC In Review*, the hot topic was the TLC Distance Learning Quality Initiative (DLQI) Phase 1. The TLC is now transitioning to DLQI Phase 2 where the overarching goal will be to identify and implement processes and practices to improve DL quality at the academic degree and certificate levels. For Academic Year 2021, TLC will be enlisting support from NPS academic associates, program managers, and program officers who should be most interested and be able to contribute the most to this phase of DLQI.

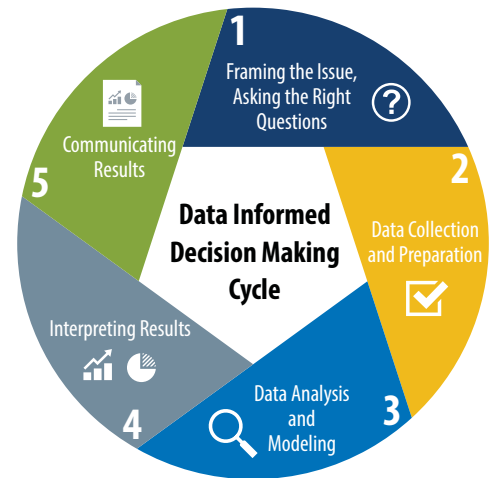
Building upon and integrating the results from the *FLEX Spaces*, *DLQI*, and *COVID-19* efforts, the TLC intends to launch a new initiative in Academic Year 2021, called **Data Analytics Informing Teaching and Hybrid Learning (DAiTa HL)**. The preliminary objectives for this initiative are as follows:

A) Develop and disseminate criteria for assessing the quality of hybrid-course delivery modes in which some students in class sessions participate in a face-to-face, residence mode at the same time that other students participate at geographically separated locations.

B) Develop and disseminate best practices for teaching and learning in classes that are taught simultaneously in a hybrid delivery mode at the academic program, certificate, and course levels.

C) Design and implement a data collection and analysis architecture to include an assessment methodology, database, analytical tools, and reporting mechanisms that support teaching and learning at the academic program, certificate, and course levels.

In order to achieve the first two objectives for the DAiTa HL initiative, the TLC has designed an analytical architecture that will support more robust institutional, and course assessment as a basis for future educational improvements. This initiative will provide an opportunity to leverage and build upon other recent data analytics efforts at NPS. For example, through the campus Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) initiative, TLC representatives are developing metrics and a data-visualization dashboard to inform internal and external stakeholders about the current status and progress toward achieving I&D goals. The TLC will apply lessons learned from developing



and implementing I&D analysis tools to the broader DAiTa HL initiative. The TLC is also working closely with ITACS and other key stakeholders to develop a database, assessment methodology, and analysis toolbox that supports ongoing program evaluation for the Regional Defense Fellowship Program (RDFP)/International Military Education Training (IMET) sponsored by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA). Experiences garnered from this large-scale DSCA program-evaluation project will be valuable in designing assessment approaches at NPS and implementing analytical tools for multiple uses across campus, such as teaching and learning improvements and educational-program evaluation. Further, the DAiTa HL efforts will provide findings and suggest interventions for courses delivered in hybrid learning modes, which is a high-emphasis area as a result of COVID-19. Longer term, this initiative will foster a more robust educational-assessment system that supports continuous improvement.



Learn More About
TLC Initiatives





“With all of the communication and collaboration tools we have, I feel like I am actually more in touch with the faculty and students than before we started working from home.”

— April Fertig, Educational Tech Specialist



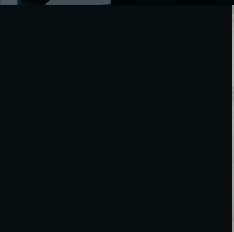
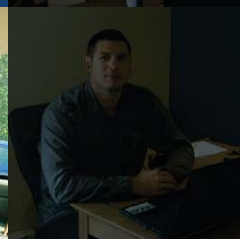
TLC RECOGNIZES YOU! **THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION**

With the unexpected, overnight transition from residence to DL education in the spring of 2020 due to COVID-19, NPS life looks and feels a lot different than it did last year. Whether you are a student engaged in distance learning, a faculty member providing instruction, or a staff member coordinating support, it seems you are ALL doing it from somewhere else now. The TLC would like to acknowledge and thank all of you who have made rapid adjustments, sacrifices, and contributions to ensure the continuation of the NPS mission of providing defense-focused graduate education.



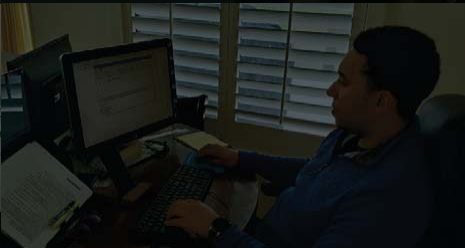
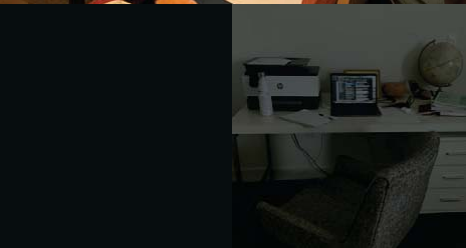
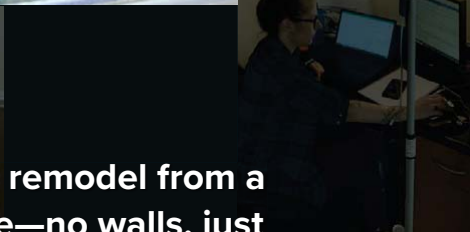
“Sometimes the quietest place is outside in the back of your car.”

— LT Kuran Bricker, Student, GSDM



“I am teaching through a remodel from a space that was my office—no walls, just framing with my grandfather’s canvas paint tarps hung to simulate walls.”

— Kathryn Aten, Associate Prof., GSDM





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The Naval Postgraduate School

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